REMARKS

This Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated October 8, 2008 issued in connection with the above-identified application. A petition for a three-month extension of time accompanies this Amendment. With this Amendment, claim 8 has been amended. No new matter has been introduced by the amendments made to the claims. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claim 8 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 for being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Specifically, the Examiner alleges that the "program" recited in the claim is software *per se*, which is non-statutory. The Applicants have amended claim 8 to recite that the program is "stored on a computer-readable storage medium." As amended, the "program" recited in the claim is now structurally and functionally interrelated to the "computer-readable storage medium" and as such is now statutory (see MPEP 2106.01). Withdrawal of the rejection to claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. 101 is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1-2 and 4-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,887,193, hereafter "Takahashi") in view of Japanese Patent to Canon (Japanese Patent No. 7-444777, hereafter "Canon"), and further in view of Japanese Patent to Toshiba (Japanese Patent No. 11317991, hereafter "Toshiba"). The Applicants assert that the cited prior art fails to disclose or suggest all the features recited in at least independent claims 1 and 8. Claim 1 recites the following features:

"[a]n information processing apparatus storing a plurality of format engines each for executing data described in a different format, the information processing apparatus comprising:

format engine managing means for pre-defining common states which define operating states of each format engine in a representation common to all the format engines, and managing an operation of each format engine;

individual state obtaining means, provided in correspondence with each format engine, for obtaining an individual state of each format engine and sending common state information indicating the common state corresponding to the obtained individual state to the format engine managing means; and

operation control means, provided in correspondence with each format engine, for pre-

7

defining a correspondence between the common states and individual states which define the operating states of each format engine in a representation different for each format engine, and controlling operations of the format engines such that each format engine is in an arbitrary individual state;

wherein for changing a format engine to a predetermined common state, the format engine managing means sends a message including common state information indicating the predetermined common state to the operation control means provided in correspondence with the format engine, and when the message is sent from the format engine managing means, the operation control means controls the format engine such that the format engine is in the individual state corresponding to the common state indicated by the common state information included in the message; and

wherein the format engine managing means manages an operation of each format engine based on the common state indicated by the common state information which is outputted from the individual state obtaining means." (Emphasis added).

The features emphasized above in independent claim 1 are recited in independent claim 8. Additionally, the features emphasized above are fully supported by the Applicants' disclosure.

In the Office Action, the Examiner relies on the combination of Takahashi, Canon and Toshiba for disclosing or suggesting all the features recited in independent claim 8. However, the Examiner relies primarily on Takahashi for disclosing or suggesting the "individual state obtaining means" similarly recited in the above claims.

Specifically, Takahashi discloses controlling the on and off state of a multimedia device using a multimedia controller; and a multimedia device that includes a software object which is a resident multimedia controller for performing management of the entire multimedia device. However, Takahashi fails to disclose or suggest the claimed common state and individual state information, let alone correspondence between common states and individual states which define the outputting of each format engine in a representation different for each format engine; and controlling the operation of the format engines such that each engine is in an arbitrary individual state.

The Examiner also noted the above deficiencies in Takahashi. In the Office Action, the

Examiner states that Takahashi "does not explicitly teach" all the features of the "format engine managing means," and the "individual state obtaining means" of independent claims 1 and 8 (see pg. 4).

Although the Examiner relies on Canon for disclosing the claimed "format engine managing means," the Examiner relies primarily on Toshiba for disclosing or suggesting all the features of the claimed "individual state obtaining means." However, the Applicants assert that Toshiba fails to overcome the deficiencies noted above in Takahashi and Canon with regard to disclosing or suggesting all the features of the claimed "individual state obtaining means" of independent claims 1 and 8.

Toshiba discloses a configuration in which a DVD player and a VTR (both of which correspond to a format engine of the current application) are connected to an engine (which corresponds to an information processor of the current application) via a network. The format engine obtains an ID and a list of functions (code 00 which corresponds to Play, code 01 which corresponds to Stop, code 04 which corresponds to Forward Skip, and code 05 which corresponds to Backward Skip) stored in a DVD, and at the same time obtains an ID and a list of functions (code 00 which corresponds to Play, code 01 which corresponds to Stop, code 02 which corresponds to Feed Forward, and a code 03 which corresponds to Rewind) stored in a VCR (video cassette recorder, or a VTR: video tape recorder) via the network.

The format engine then displays a GUI object that corresponds to the obtained function. The above interpretation of Toshiba is supported by at least Fig. 33 of the reference, which shows an object which corresponds to each function included in the obtained list of functions.

Thus, Toshiba does not disclose a configuration (i.e., the individual state obtaining means), "which is provided in correspondence with each format engine, for obtaining an individual state of each format engine." Furthermore, in the configuration of Toshiba, a function selected from the GUI object displayed on a display screen of the engine, is sent to the corresponding DVD and VTR via the network, which means the engine, the DVD and VTR are separate apparatuses connected via the network.

On the other hand, the individual state obtaining means and format engine managing means of the present invention (as recited in independent claim 1 and 8) are included in a single

9

information processing apparatus. Additionally, as noted above, the cited prior art (individually or in combination) fails to disclose or suggest a configuration for "sending common state information indicating the common state corresponding to the obtained individual state to the format engine managing means."

Based on the above discussion, no combination of Takahashi, Canon and Toshiba would result in, or otherwise render obvious, independent claims 1 and 8. Likewise, no combination of Takahashi, Canon and Toshiba would result in, or otherwise render obvious, claims 2 and 4-7 at least by virtue of their dependencies from independent claim 1.

In the Office Action, claim 9 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi in view of Canon and Toshiba, and further in view of the Official Notice taken by the Examiner (hereafter "the Official Notice"). Claim 9 depends from independent claim 1. As noted above, Takahashi, Canon and Toshiba fail to disclose or suggest all the features recited in independent claim 1. Additionally, the Official Notice fails to overcome the deficiencies noted above in Takahashi, Canon and Toshiba. Accordingly, no combination of Takahashi, Canon, Toshiba and the Official Notice would result in, or otherwise render obvious, claim 9 at least by virtue of its dependency from independent claim 1.

Based on the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections presented in the outstanding Office Action, and pass the present application to issue.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Yuki HORII et al.

/Mark D. Pratt/

By: 2009.04.08 15:06:24 -04'00'
_____

Mark D. Pratt
Registration No. 45,794
Attorney for Applicants

MDP/ats
Washington, D.C. 20006-1021
Telephone (202) 721-8200
Facsimile (202) 721-8250
April 8, 2009

11